Liberty

NOT THE DAUGHTER BUT THE MOTHER OF ORDER — PROUDHON

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"For always in thine eyes, O Liberty!
Shines that high light whereby the world is saved;
And though thou slay us, we will trust in thee."
JOHN HAY.

On Picket Duty.

Legislation is usurpation.

Those who would abolish poverty by reducing the hours of labor put the cart before the horse.

The people are poor, not because they receive low wages, but because they give their credit away and buy it back.

Liberty owes her readers an apology for the slight delay in the appearance of this number. Hereafter our mailing day will be Friday, one day later than heretofore.

One of our Greenback exchanges says that "every man who has a ballot and fails to use it in defence of American liberty is responsible if those liberties are abridged." Every man who casts a ballot necessarily uses it in offence against American liberty, it being the chief instrument of American slavery.

"Bullion" speaks the truth in saying that "the benefit of credit is overbalanced by the disadvantage of debt." But to a capable and honest person the only disadvantage of any debt that he is liable to contract consists in the steady drain of usury. Make credit gratuitous by organizing it, and its blessings will be unmixed.

The New Bedford "News" was the victim of the worst case of gush developed by the death of the president. Its words are not before us as we write, but our quotation of them does not differ materially from the literal, if at all. "The nation now has in heaven a holy trinity, — Washington, Lincoln, Garfield, — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit." What rot!

The outcry against middlemen is senseless. As E. H. Heywood puts it, "middlemen are as important as end men." And they are as truly producers. Distribution is a part of production. Nothing is wholly produced until it is ready for use, and nothing is ready for use until it has reached the place where it is to be used. Whoever brings it to that place is a producer, and as such entitled to charge for his work. The trouble with middlemen is that they charge consumers not only for their work, but for the use of their invested capital. As it is, they are useful members of society. Eliminate usury from their methods, and they will become respectable members also.

"The hanging of Guiteau is a pleasure and duty which belongs solely and exclusively to the people of the United States." The brutal barbarian who says this is named S. F. Norton. He edits a paper in Chicago called "The Sentinel," and desires to entrust the rulers of this people of peculiar "pleasures" with the exclusive power to manufacture the tool by which all products are distributed. All the monopolies go together, of which we have fresh proof in this claim of the would-be monopolists of money to a monopoly of murder. This same editor has the shamelessness to admit that the tool referred to, i. e., the greenback, is a "forced loan," and to attempt to justify it as such; yet he complains in the same column of the act of a band of robbers who recently contracted a forced loan with the passengers of a Western railway train by presenting pistols at their heads and commanding them to deliver. All these things are to be expected from a member of a party that relies on the law for the accomplishment of everything. Law is its God, and makes its morality. Robbery through the instrumentality of a legal-tender note is right; robbery through the instrumentality of a revolver is wrong. Murder unsanctioned by statute finds no favor in this Greenbacker's eyes, but murder done on the scaffold is to him, not only right, but sweet.

A faint idea of the state of things that engenders Nihilism is conveyed by the statement of the Russian delegates to the International Literary Congress at Vienna, who, in combating a motion of a French delegate to petition the czar for the pardon of the Russian novelist who has been in exile in Siberia for eight years for tinging his writings with socialism, declared that, if the petition should be adopted, it would be impossible for them to return to Russia. We commend this fact to D. A. Wasson and all other slanderers of the Nihilists. After hearing of it, he will doubtless be moved to write another article for the "Free Religious Index," glorifying the Alexanders as apostles of liberty.

Liberty congratulates herself and Anarchists generally on the rapidity with which our principles are obtaining a foothold. An indication of their progress is seen in the following editorial comments of so prominent a newspaper as the Boston "Daily Globe" on the long-continued disability of the president: "The Republic is not a failure. The great governmental experiment of the new world has demonstrated that men do not need rulers; that they can govern themselves. It has passed through a crisis unforeseen by its founders and unprovided for in its Constitution,—and it still lives, the world's grand beacon light on the road to Liberty. . . . . The only real strength of government is the cohesive power of the masses and the confidence of the people in their ability to govern themselves in the absence of all official representatives of authority and power. This strength the Republic possesses, and it is a success. It shows to the world that a measure of self-government is a thousand times better than all the military power and 'divine right' that ever existed, and more powerful for good, for peace, for the maintenance of human rights. The attitude of the American people in the face of what would have been a crisis in any other country has advanced the cause of humanity, proved the expediency as well as the justice of popular government, and ought to silence those who have expressed the belief, fathered by the wish, that the great American experiment must ultimately fail through lack of strength. The American people have shown the grandeur of their power, the permanency of their principles, and their unwavering loyalty to liberty and justice in this period of doubt and uncertainty, and given hope and courage to oppressed humanity to struggle onward and upward toward the light, in the footsteps of the nation that has led the march of human progress, and *will be, a hundred years hence, as far in advance of the present as the present is in advance of the ideas of a hundred years ago*, if it only remains true to 'government by the people' and resists every effort to shackle it with a strong government of centralized power and exaggerated official authority." Well said, the "Daily Globe"!

About Progressive People.

Mr. A. C. Swinburne writes the article on Walter Savage Landor in the "Encyclopædia Britannica."

The numerous friends of Rev. O. B. Frothingham are urging him to reconsider his decision not to resume his pulpit labors. Their solicitations will probably be unsuccessful.

F. W. Gunn, the head of the "Gunnery School," at Washington, Conn., one of the earliest and most active abolitionist of that state, died recently. He was the original of Mr. Bird in Dr. J. G. Holland's novel, "Arthur Bonnycastle."

Mr. Swinburne writes to the "Rappel:" "England has just lost her last Republican and free-thinking patriarch. My old friend Trelawney is gone, at the great age of eighty-eight, to meet the friends and emulators of his errant and war-like youth—Shelley, Byron, and Canaris."

A monument to Victor Hugo is to be erected in his island home of Guernsey by the inhabitants, who are much attached to him. It was to Guernsey that the novelist dedicated his "Toilers of the Sea"—"that small portion of Norman ground, severe yet kind, my present asylum, perhaps my tomb."

Garibaldi's face is described by a recent visitor as absolutely livid, the yellow-white of a corpse, and his hair and beard are perfectly white. His eyes, however, retain fire and move about from side to side, following people around the room, even though he does not change his attitude in the slightest degree.

John Bright's two brothers-in-law, the Lucases, were originally Quakers. One joined the Roman Catholic Church, established "The Tablet" newspaper, and represented an Irish constituency in parliament; the other became a Radical of Radicals. Of the brothers Harcourt, now in parliament, one is a Tory, the other a Liberal, and Newman, of the Roman Church, has a brother, Francis W., who is a Deist.

Governor Roberts of Texas, who called down on his head unlimited abuse by refusing to join in Governor Foster's project for a day of thanksgiving, is accustomed to give his personal supervision to the prisoners in the State penitentiary. Most of them, he says, are young men from the Northwest, East, and North, who, having strayed from home restraints, have fallen into bad company and got into trouble. He tells them that good conduct will shorten their terms, and, if they behave themselves, pardons them out.

Herr Most, the imprisoned editor of the London "Freiheit," will be put up in the Socialist interest for a Berlin constituency at the coming elections. He refuses to apply for release from Clerkenwell prison, where, although treated as a common criminal, he is exempted from some of the more rigorous conditions attached to that grade. In addition to ordinary prison fare he has two pints of milk daily and is employed at tailoring instead of more laborious work. Most is comparatively cheerful and in fairly good health. He complains of having no books allowed for reading except religious tracts, and being denied the use of pens and paper.

Gen. Garibaldi recently completed his seventy-fourth year, and many telegrams of congratulation were received by him on that day, which was July 4. He was especially pleased by a deputation sent to him in the evening of July 3 by the simple folk of the islet of Maddalena, near whom, on his Caprera rock, he has, in his latter years, made his fixed abode. The leader of the deputation made a short address to the hero of Italian unity, who, in reply, thanked them for their good wishes, and disclaimed the tributes as paid to his own person, it being, he said, rather to the sentiments he had always manifested: his person "was worth no more than any other."

The expulsion of Prince Kropotkine from Switzerland will not cause a suspension of "Le Revolté." His friends will superintend its production at Geneva. The prince is still in Switzerland, and will not go to England, until his wife, who is taking the medical course at the University of Geneva, has finished her work and passed her examinations. In England he will give a course of lectures on the internal condition of Russia, besides contributing to the columns of the journal published at Newcastle-on-Tyne by Joseph Cowen, M.P., whose guest he is to be. The prince has been a constant visitor to London during the last two years, and formerly resided among the Socialists in Camden Town. He is no longer a young man, but the advance of years has not a whit diminished his revolutionary ardor.

Liberty.

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"A free man is one who enjoys the use of his reason and his faculties; who is neither blinded by passion, nor hindered or driven by oppression, nor deceived by erroneous opinions." — PROUDHON.

Sinister Sorrow.

Dead or alive, all's one to me, with mischievous persons; but alas! how very grievously all's two to me, when they are helpful and noble ones. — *John Ruskin.*

No person of proper human feeling would insult a sincere mourner standing at a grave. Doubtless there are many mourners in this hour of what is called "the nation's sorrow" who, however mistaken, are honest in their grief. This article is not for them. Indeed, to a certain extent we share their sorrow. Garfield died manfully after many weeks of patient suffering, as many another man dies every day. With all of these victims we have sympathy in their suffering, for all of them respect in their fortitude; with and for Garfield as much as the rest, and no more. Nor to those deluded persons who are led to shed dutiful tears by an idolatrous worship of rulers and governments have we a word to say to-day. True, it is Liberty's main purpose to sooner or later convict them of their error; but, cherishing the error honestly, let them respect its forms.

Our indignant denunciation is of the heartless scoundrels whose tool Garfield has been, who, with sinister purpose, have put in operation all this machinery of woe, hoping thereby to intimidate or bribe the late president's successors into following his example. Garfield *died* manfully, we said above. Did he *live* manfully? That is the main question. He appears to have been an amiable friend, a good husband and father, and a hard though rather superficial student. But his was not the stuff of human grandeur. A man who, at twenty-five or thirty, writes sophomoric poetry, preaches, prays, and sings pennyroyal hymns in Christian conventicles, and who, in his maturer years, consorts largely and lovingly with priests and indulges in their religious gush, is not the kind of man that is apt to do much in helping the world onward. In the composition of such men putty is a large ingredient; and so it was with Garfield. All his later life he has been led by the nose by designing villains, schemers against the people's products. He has helped them, more or less innocently, more or less guiltily, yielding to their proffered temptations and sometimes betraying the people's trusts. A very convenient man for our purposes, think the schemers. His place must not be left vacant. Others must be tempted into it. So, taking advantage of the undue respect for the office which he chanced to hold, at their bidding the word goes forth.

Toll the bells! Fire the minute-guns! Bestow riches on his family! Bear his body through the country with funeral pomp and circumstance! Hang upon the outer walls the gloomy trappings of woe! And all is promptly done. The commercial world responds in a spirit of rivalry, each member of it trying to advertise his interests by surpassing his neighbor in the ostentation of sorrow. Preachers fill the air with lamentations, and poets sing the martyr's praises for a price. Messages of condolence and grief pass back and forth under the ocean between the crowned heads of Europe and the uncrowned despots of America, Victoria, William, and Alexander recognizing instinctively that, in the death of a president no less than in that of a king, a fellow-tyrant falls. The kindred of oppressors feel for each other. And by this manufactured manifestation a public sentiment is created to shield them a little longer in their grinding of the oppressed. How long shall this thing last? Let the victims abandon their prayers, wipe away the blinding tears, and look with undimmed eyes straight into the nature of these plots and plotters. A clear vision is all that's needed. The rest will follow.

Capital's Claim to Increase.

Liberty's strictures, in her last issue, upon the proposal of the Massachusetts Greenbackers, adopted at their Worcester convention, to ask the legislature to compel all corporations to distribute their profits in excess of six per cent. among the employees in proportion to their wages has stirred up Mr. J. M. L. Babcock, the author of that singular project, to a defence of it, which we gladly print in another column. And in defending it against Liberty, he is obliged to do so in behalf of capital. It seems a little odd to find this long-time defender of the rights of labor in the rôle of champion of the claims of capital; but we remember that he is one who follows the lead of justice as he sees it, take him where it may.

Before proceeding to the main question, he gives us two minor points to settle. First, he very pertinently asks why we "grieve" at his course. We answer by taking it all back. As he says, Liberty should rejoice, rather than grieve, at the honest exercise of the right to differ. When we hastily said otherwise, we said a very foolish thing. Yes, worse than that; in so far, we were false to our own standard. Mr. Babcock has Liberty's sincerest thanks for recalling her to her own position. May he and all never fail to sharply prod us, whenever they similarly catch us napping!

Second, he assumes that the profit idea cannot be ridiculous (as we pronounced it), since its converse is not well established or generally accepted. To say that the no-profit theory is not well established is to beg the principal question under discussion; to say that, because the theory is not generally accepted, the few friends that it has are not entitled to ridicule the position of its enemies is not in accordance with the nature of ideas or the custom of Mr. Babcock. How often have we listened with delight to his sarcastic dissection and merciless exposure to the light of common sense of some popular and well-nigh universal delusion in religion, politics, finance, or social life! He is in the habit of holding ridiculous all those things, whoever supports them, which his own reason pronounces absurd. And he is right in doing so, and wrong in saying that we ought not to follow his example. So, while it is clear that, on the first minor point, Mr. Babcock has the better of Liberty, on the second Liberty as decidedly has the better of Mr. Babcock.

Now to the question proper. Labor, says our friend, never gains anything by extravagant claims. True; and no claim is extravagant that does not exceed justice. But it is equally true that labor always loses by foolish concessions; and, in this industrial struggle, every concession is foolish that falls short of justice. It is to be decided, then, not whether Liberty's claim for labor is extravagant, but whether it is just. "Whatever contributes to production is entitled to an equitable share in the distribution!" Wrong! *Whoever* contributes to production is alone so entitled. *What* has no rights that *Who* is bound to respect. *What* is a thing; *Who* is a person. Things have no claims; they exist only to be claimed. The possession of a right cannot be predicated of dead material, but only of a living person. "In the production of a loaf of bread, the plough performs an important service, and equitably comes in for a share of the loaf." Absurd! A plough cannot own bread, and, if it could, would be unable to eat it. A plough is a *What*, one of those things above mentioned, to which no rights are attributable.

Oh! but we see. "Suppose one man spends his life in making ploughs to be used by others who sow and harvest wheat. If he furnishes his ploughs only on condition that they be returned to him in as good state as when taken away, how is he to get his bread?" It is the maker of the plough, then, and not the plough itself, that is entitled to a reward? *What* has given place to *Who*. Well, we'll not quarrel over that. The maker of the plough certainly is entitled to pay for his work. Full pay, paid once; no more. That pay is the plough itself, or its equivalent in other marketable products, said equivalent being measured by the amount of labor employed in their production. But if he lends his plough and gets only his plough back, how is he to get his bread? asks Mr. Babcock, much concerned. Ask us an easy one, if you please. We give this one up. But why should he lend his plough? Why does he not sell it to the farmer, and use the proceeds to buy bread of the baker? See, Mr. Babcock? If the lender of the plough "receives nothing more than his plough again, he receives nothing for the product of his own labor, and is on the way to starvation." Well, if the fool will not sell his plough, let him starve. Who cares? It's his own fault. How can he expect to receive anything for the product of his own labor, if he refuses to permanently part with it? Does Mr. Babcock propose to steadily add to this product at the expense of some laborer, and meanwhile allow this idler, who has only made a plough, to loaf on in luxury, for the balance of his life, on the strength of his one achievement? Certainly not, when our friend understands himself. And then he will say with us that the slice of bread which the plough-lender should receive can be neither large nor small, but must be nothing.

To that end we commend to Mr. Babcock the words of his own candidate for secretary of state, nominated at the Worcester convention, A. B. Brown, editor of "The Republic," who says: "The laborers of the world, instead of having only a small fraction of the wealth in the world, should have all the wealth. To effect this, all monopolies must be terminated,—whether they be monopolies of single individuals or 'majorities,'—and labor-cost must be recognized as the measure and limit of price." If Mr. Brown sticks to these words and the Greenbackers to their platform, there's going to be a collision, and Mr. Brown will keep the track. But, lest Mr. Brown's authority should not prove sufficient, we refer Mr. Babcock further to one of his favorite authors, John Ruskin, who argues this very point on Mr. Babcock's own ground, except that he illustrates his position by a plane instead of a plough. Mr. Babcock may find his words under the heading, "The Position of William," immediately following his own letter to us. If he succeeds in showing Mr. Brown's assertions to be baseless and Mr. Ruskin's arguments to be illogical, he may then come to Liberty for other foes to conquer. Till then we shall be but an interested spectator of his contest.

The Voltairean Warfare.

Voltaire and Paine found themselves face to face with a world steeped in a degrading superstition called Christianity. It was proclaimed as religion. But the fact now appears that that which distinguished it from other so-called religions was not a special refinement of, or superior emphasis given to, the religious idea, but a dissimilarity in the catalogue of miraculous and superstitious dogmas. Humboldt asserted that "all possible religions contain three distinct parts: first, a code of morals, very fine and nearly the same in all; second, a geological dream; and third, a myth, or historical novelette, which last becomes the most important of all." T. W. Higginson, quoting this paragraph, remarks: "The essential truth of this observation may be seen when we compare the different religions of the world, side by side. 'The main difference lies here,—that each fills some blank space in its creed with the name of a different teacher. For instance, the Oriental Parsee repeats the four main points of his creed as follows: 'To believe in one god, and hope for mercy from him only; to believe in a future state of existence; to do as you would be done by.' Thus far the Parsee keeps on the universal ground of religion; then he drops into the language of his sect, and adds,—'To

believe in Zoroaster as lawgiver, and hold his writings sacred.' The creed thus furnishes a formula for all religions. It might be printed in blank, like a circular, leaving one of the *closing* names to be filled in. For Zoroaster read Christ, and you have Christianity; read Buddha, and you have Buddhism; read Mohammed, and you have Mohammedanism."

Mr. Higginson's statement is supported by a long array of facts, which show how exactly alike are all the religions our earth has produced, each one of them deep-rooted in human ignorance, and supported from age to age by the authority of holy traditions, sacred books, and the lordship of a "divine person" whose supposed words stand as limits of all thought, reason, experience, world without end. In short, each religion is established by a "revelation" God (the imaginary) speaks, using the human voice, and that speech, good or bad, true or false, backed up by reputed miracles, is for all time, on the issues presented, to be received as the only "wisdom" mankind may entertain. It is the "revelation" made once and for all.

Now, in this respect Christianity stands precisely where all the other religions stand. It is called Christianity because its hero was the Christ, and not Buddha or Mohammed.

We do not speak here of its moral code. Be that better or worse than others, it has its basis, for most part, in reason, and not in "revelation." But as a religion it is the same superstitious structure which other peoples have reared, the Hebrews giving to theirs their own local coloring. Christianity is the shading off of the Hebraic idea. The Old Testament Jew looked for a temporal Messiah, king, deliverer, whom their God should send and establish on the throne of David. They were watching for the Christ, the God-appointed great man, believing such a person would come and restore their nationality. The Jesus of Nazareth claiming to be that Christ they rejected, for the good reason, it may be supposed, that he was unable to fulfil their expectation. In other words, as he advanced in his career, he outgrew the idea of the State, and set himself to found a more rational kingdom. The idea of Liberty had taken possession of him, and, with limitations, he became one of its apostles. Had he not been killed within two years or more of his entrance upon the proclamation of ideas so contrary to Jewish conservatism, his record in history as a defender of liberty might have been far less imperfect. But, as it was, he grasped the idea of *a world governed without force*, and yielded himself to be its martyr. Little, however, did his immediate followers enter into the great thought that had found lodgment in his mind. They seized on his mistakes and not on his truths, and built thereon a spiritual despotism called the Church, which no Statecraft had surpassed. The Jews would have had a Christ on a throne whom they could see, a man of wisdom and goodness, enforcing his decrees by the authority of God. The Christian put the Christ on an invisible throne, called *him* the God, and bowed, mind and spirit, to his supposed dictation. Unable to conceive the sublime idea of Liberty that he conceived, they fastened upon all the absurdities of belief he had received by inheritance, and have proclaimed them ever since by fire and sword, and by every inhuman invention of torture their wit could devise, — a most damnable record.

It was against this system that Voltaire and Paine set themselves in battle array, and with an intensity of conviction and life-long persistence that would honor the Christ himself. With wit, reason, laugh, or sneer, they made a breach in the hitherto solid wall. They struck blows which made the old superstition reel. Christianity turned pale with rage, and spit venom, covering with its slime each of these two bravest of men. But to no purpose. The breach was made. It has grown larger and larger, until to-day thousands of men and women are pouring through into the free land of Canaan, where they undertake, by hard thinking and experience, by their own inward promptings, to live the life their natures proclaim—a life of Liberty. What Liberty is may yet be a question; but to undertake, one and all, to solve that problem is a task magnificent, a spectacle eclipsing in grandeur all else humanity has essayed.

It is to be expected, however, that the old superstition will die hard. One thing is engraven on the world's memory: notwithstanding their Lord and Master was a non-resistant, a man of peace, *Christians know how to fight*. They are the fighters of the world. From the bigoted and most ignorant up to the so-called "liberal" and enlightened, they all retain (when they are actively Christians) the warrior's death-giving propensity. Hence, we are not surprised to find the modern liberal Christian giving his little stab into the hearts of such men as Voltaire and Paine. One of the latest of these thrusts that has come to our notice is an article by the Unitarian editor of the Boston "Sunday Herald" on "The Infidel Outlook." The one point is that Voltaire and Paine did only negative work, when they ought to have done positive work. As if to beat down the bars of the world's prison were not something quite as *positive* for that same world's everlasting good, as anything now visible as the result of our much-vaunted modern "scholarly criticism."

"WE DEMAND FOR MANKIND FREEDOM TO BECOME INTELLIGENT," was what both Voltaire and Paine reiterated all their lives. Will that world of man not one day appreciate this great service? We think so. But only as it is freed from the Christian superstition

Government and the State.

Probably, if four-fifths of those who subscribe for Liberty, and are asked to subscribe for it, could reach the ears of the editor, they would ask this question:—

If you abolish government, what do you propose to put in its place, in order to secure the blessings of life, liberty, and possession?

Of course such a question would never occur to a person trained to scientific habits of thought. It is akin to such questions as: — If you abolish slavery, what do you propose to do with four millions of ignorant niggers? If you abolish popes, priests, and organized religion, what do you propose to do with the rude and vicious masses? If you abolish marriage, what do you propose to do with the children? *etc., etc*

Thinkers, drilled in scientific methods, of course pay no attention to such irrelevant questions. Their business is simply to pursue the truth, to find out the true law and the true facts. Whose pet machine is smashed, and whose superstitions are offended is not their business. The responsible parties must take care of that,—not they. When Darwin was reminded that his theory of the origin of species would overthrow the book of Genesis and undermine revelation, he treated the reminder with a contempt becoming the man of science. It was not his business to nurse and defend the book of Genesis, and he justly treated it as a piece of whining impudence to ask him to do so.

But unfortunately, the average man is not a thinker, and only here and there a man has sufficient mental training to abide by the canons of science and logic. We will attempt, therefore, to answer the above question with as much completeness as our space will permit in this issue.

And we answer, in the first place, that Liberty *does not* propose to abolish government, in so far as by government is meant any social arrangement looking to a regulated well-being of the parties concerned, provided, however (and this is the all-in-all of our philosophy), that the given arrangement shall hinge on choice, natural selection, and voluntary assent, and not on anticipated needs of constitution-making conspirators, backed by prearranged brute force, to coerce and crush dissenters

We of course recognize government in nature. Turn twenty horned cattle into a field, and without much political goring they, by unconscious assent, select a leader and protector. Every well-regulated family is a government. The little ones, feeling their weakness and inexperience, look up to father and mother, and, although the direction of the fond parent has the effect of a stern command, the government is one of love, assent, yea, pleasure. Wherever a company of people come together, in nigh life or low, there is government. Left to themselves, somebody will soon be recognized as the fittest in his sphere, and he will lead, direct, — yes, govern if you will, — through voluntary recognition of his fitness to do so. Against such arrangements Liberty has no war to wage. On the contrary, it is government in this sense that we wish to see take the place of the old despotic swindle. It is the *State* against which we have declared a war of extermination, and to those who will follow us from issue to issue we promise to show conclusively that the State has nothing in common with the above-cited arrangements.

Perhaps, however, for the present, the shortest way to illustrate, in the rough, what we mean, will be to state two cases briefly:—

CASE I. A thousand persons meet in an open field. Their purpose is to secure life, liberty, and possession. As they stand there, ready to go to work, a latent feeling possesses them that some kind of regulated association would conduce to their best well-being. Suddenly a kind but resolute-looking individual, with noble brow and persuasive mien, plants himself on an elevation and addresses the gathering. "Men and women," says he; "having had large experience in the concerns of life, I volunteer a proposal to you. It is that you separate, in such groups as selection may direct, and go to the neighboring lands. Each of you can seize upon such lands as you can occupy and cultivate, and there is enough for all. If any number of you, by experimental contact with me, should conclude that I would make a good leader, adviser, and director, I am at your service for such compensation as we can agree upon. Bear in mind, however, that I do not speak with authority, but only as an individual, like all the rest of you. I think my advice is good, and I invite those who assent to follow me; but those who may dissent are perfectly free to go their own way, and I can assure them that, should my party prove the strongest in numbers, no manner of molestation or coercion will be visited upon them, except they should so far forget themselves as to deny to us the same rights as individuals which we freely accord to them."

It is very probable that this individual would become the accepted leader (governor, if you will) of the new civilization. If any one believes that landlordism could exist in that civilization, let him go to the shores and watch a thousand rude clam-diggers, who never usurp each other's territory or tread on each other's toes; or, let him go into a field where a thousand people, unschooled in political economy, are gathering berries. The facility with which even the rudest classes adjust their differences, distribute equitably natural opportunities, and behave themselves generally, if let alone, is wonderful. And it always comes through government, but not government after the manner of the State.

CASE II. A thousand persons meet in an open field. Their purpose, as before, is to secure life, liberty, and possession But, while they stand hesitating, half a dozen designing rogues meet in caucus. They there, in convention, concoct a so-called constitution for the government of the assemblage. The main provision of this constitution is that, if three-fourths of the assemblage vote for it, the remaining fourth shall be forcibly compelled to be governed by it, against their will. To this end executive officers are provided for, with artillery to coerce dissenters. The constitution recognizes usury, land-grabbing, and all the deadly prerogatives of property. Then, fortifying themselves with the superstition that a majority has the sacred right of sovereignty over the minority, the spokesman of the conspirators presents his constitution to the assemblage. Three-fourths vote for it, and the other fourth dissent. This conspiracy, when put into practice, becomes the State. Now, when the people separate and go into the fields to seize land and build up their civilization, a different order of things is soon apparent Certain greedy and shameless schemers get ahead of the rest, and stake off great tracts of land. When the unsuspect-

ing multitude arrive, they find all the best lands gobbled up and monopolized. Not monopolized, however, by occupation and cultivation, but monopolized and held on the fiction of the right of discovery, which the constitution recognizes. The disinherited dissent, but appeal is in vain. The militia stand at the backs of the land-grabbers, and defend their monopoly. There is nothing left for them to do but to pay rent to the land-grabbers, which is soon so gauged that the masses are made the virtual slaves of the landlords.

This is the State. It is not government in any sense worthy of respect. It is a conspiracy. It is usurpation, made possible by the ignorance, credulity, and superstition of the victims. One of its chief prerogatives is the power to take life, instead of preserving it. It is the abnegation of Liberty, and the chief enemy of just possession. Take it out of the way in Ireland, and landlordism dies without the shedding of a drop of blood. Take it out of the way in Russia, and the hand of progress will jump ahead five centuries on the dial of civilization. Take it out of the way in America, and a few scamps in Wall Street will not hold the legitimate business world in financial bondage, nor a few monopolizing thieves stand between the masses and their daily bread.

Much as "a nation on its knees" and "fifty millions in mourning" may deplore it, there will be more assassination of political figure-heads before there is less, and for cause, as things are now drifting. Against the coming storm Liberty raises its voice as one crying in the wilderness. But we cry out, not against anything truly worthy the name of government, but against a monstrous conspiracy, born of stealth on the one hand and superstition on the other, and perpetuated by doing violence to the natural right of dissent in the individual. The State must die, if life is to be held sacred. The State must die, if Liberty would live. The State must die, if just possession is to unseat the murderous despot, Property.

Our European Letter.

[From Liberty's Special Correspondent.]

AMSTERDAM, Holland, September 2.—The Swiss provinces of the Russian empire have, by order of their most gracious monarch Alexander III, declared that Pierre Kropotkine is a man dangerous to orderly monarchical institutions, and therefore unworthy to remain longer within the boundary of the above dependency.

Very well so!

I am neither astonished, nor indignant, nor alarmed at the above act. It is a historical, inevitable, logical necessity that, in the same proportion that the revolutionary spirit spreads, the *bourgeoisie* has to rescind its so-called liberties!

It shows us, at the same time, that this class is everywhere the same,—that the political form of their exploiting organization is, and must be, entirely indifferent to us. It will completely open the eyes of those few among us, who still labor under some delusions in regard to the big sign, "Republic," which some smart auctioneers have put over their shop.

The *bourgeoisie* will be forced, as fast as their safety is endangered, to throw one after another of their "liberal institutions" overboard, like an aeronaut who, sinking in his balloon, at last is forced even to throw off his own necessary clothes, showing himself in a state of nudity. And thus I like to see them. Away with your hypocrisy, your cant; show yourselves as you are. You will see them thus, in a short time, in the United States too.

The *bourgeoisie*, though adoring the republican form, because it enables them to reign supreme without sharing the profits of their exploitation with an always costly monarch, are doubting its capacity to protect them against aggression from beyond, and have therefore a growing inclination to put themselves under a military dictatorship, which they detest, since it humiliates them, but which, at least, offers them tranquillity in the streets (so immensely dear to them) and so-called public order.

Your next will be Grant; and—"thou shallst be king hereafter, Macbeth."

I would consider this realization of the imperial notions of your shoddy aristocracy as one of the most fortunate things that could happen to the American people. It is very easy to overthrow an empire and to execute a king; it is ten thousand times more difficult to upset a republic.

I could not better close my letter than by giving you the first publication of an English translation of the article that leads the clandestine German paper, "The Fight," which will make its appearance in a few days:—

Yes, the fight!
A fight for life or death: to the knife, to the teeth.
You wished it; you may have it!
There was a time when it was still in your power to avoid it, your insatiability, your rapacity prevented you. Like a wild beast you hunt us—us who never had any other thought than the welfare of our brothers—from land to land, from abode to abode. The wild beast has developed itself. May the blood fall on your head!
You are boasting of your numerical strength, blind as you are. Do you not know, then, that the Revolutionist begins his work by abnegation of his life; that he considers the further continuance of the same as a mere accidental, irrelevant circumstance; that he looks with joy and tranquillity in the face of hourly-expected death; that we, who, at best, get an anonymous death on a heap of paving stones, are kept from ending this miserable existence only by the hope of witnessing the triumph of our ideas?
Yes, we are a thousand times stronger than you!
Then, on to the fight!

Out from their scabbards your swords!
No longer will Labor brook lords.

A Defence of Capital.

MY DEAR MR. TUCKER:—Why do you "grieve" at a difference of opinion between us? Am I to be bribed to agree with a valued friend by the fear that he will grieve if I do not? Liberty, I should say, imposes no such burden on freedom of thought, but, rather, rejoices in its fullest exercise.

I did not know that the "no-profit" theory had become so well established, or so generally accepted, as to render ridiculous any proposition not based upon it.

Yet that is the only point I understand you to urge against the measure I proposed. But I never could see that labor, in its unequal struggle for its rights, gained anything by extravagant claims. Whatever contributes to production is entitled to an equitable share in the distribution. In the production of a loaf of bread (the example which you set forth in a magnificent paragraph), the plough performs an important, if not indispensable service, and equitably comes in for a share of the loaf. Is that share to be a slice which compensates only for the wear and tear? It seems to me that it should be slightly thicker, even if no more than "the ninth part of a hair." For suppose one man spends his life in making ploughs to be used by others who sow and harvest wheat. If he furnishes his ploughs only on condition that they be returned to him in as good state as when taken away, how is he to get his bread? Labor, empty-handed, proposes to raise wheat; but it can do nothing without a plough, and asks the loan of one from the man who made it. If this man receives nothing more than his plough again, he receives nothing for the product of his own labor, and is on the way to starvation. What proportion he ought to receive is another question, on which I do not enter here; it may be ever so small, but it should be something.

Capital, we will agree, has hitherto had the lion's share; why condemn a measure which simply proposes to restore to labor a portion, at least, of what it is entitled to?

I say nothing on the theory of "natural laws," because I understood you to suggest that point only to waive it.

Cordially yours,

J. M. L. BABCOCK.

"The Position of William."

[FROM RUSKIN'S LETTERS TO BRITISH WORKMEN.]

What you call "wages," practically, is the quantity of food which the possessor of the land gives you, to work for him. There is, finally, no "capital" but that. If all the money of all the capitalists in the whole world were destroyed; the notes and bills burnt, the gold irrecoverably buried, and all the machines and apparatus of manufactures crushed, by a mistake in signals, in one catastrophe; and nothing remained but the land, with its animals and vegetables, and buildings for shelter,—the poorer population would be very little worse off than they are at this instant; and their labor, instead of being "limited" by the destruction, would be greatly stimulated. They would feed themselves from the animals and growing crop; heap here and there a few tons of ironstone together, build rough walls round them to get a blast, and in a fortnight they would have iron tools again, and be ploughing and fighting, just as usual. It is only we who had the capital who would suffer; we should not be able to live idle, as we do now, and many of us—I, for instance—should starve at once: but you, though little the worse, would none of you be the better eventually, for our loss—or starvation. The removal of superfluous mouths would indeed benefit you somewhat, for a time; but you would soon replace them with hungrier ones; and there are many of us who are quite worth our meat to you in different ways, which I will explain in due place: also I will show you that our money is really likely to be useful to you in its accumulated form, (besides that, in the instances when it has been won by work, it justly belongs to us,) so only that you are careful never to let us persuade you into borrowing it, and paying as interest for it. You will find a very amusing story, explaining your position in that case, at the one hundred and seventeenth page of the "Manual of Political Economy," published this year at Cambridge, for your early instruction, in an almost devotionally catechetical form, by Messrs. Macmillan.

Perhaps I had better quote it to you entire: it is taken by the author "from the French."

"There was once in a village a poor carpenter, who worked hard from morning till night. One day James thought to himself, 'With my hatchet, saw, and hammer, I can only make coarse furniture, and can only get the pay for such. If I had a plane, I should please my customers more, and they would pay me more. Yes, I am resolved, I will make myself a plane.' At the end of ten days, James had in his possession an admirable plane, which he valued all the more for having made it himself. Whilst he was reckoning all the profits which he expected to derive from the use of it, he was interrupted by William, a carpenter in the neighboring village. William, having admired the plane, was struck with the advantages which might be gained from it. He said to James:

"'You must do me a service; lend me the plane for a year.'

As might be expected, James cried out, 'How can you think of such a thing, William? Well, if I do you this service, what will you do for me in return?'

"*W.* 'Nothing. Don't you know that a loan ought to be gratuitous?'

"*J.* 'I know nothing of the sort; but I do know that if I were to lend you my plane for a year, it would be giving it to you. To tell you the truth, that was not what I made it for.'

"*W.* 'Very well, then; I ask you to do me a service; what service do you ask me in return?'

"*J.* 'First, then, in a year the plane will be done for. You must therefore give me another exactly like it.'

"*W.* 'That is perfectly just. I submit to these conditions. I think you must be satisfied with this, and can require nothing further.'

"*J.* 'I think otherwise. I made the plane for myself, and not for you. I expected to gain some advantage from it. I have made the plane for the purpose of improving my work and my condition; if you merely return it to me in a year, it is you who will gain the profit of it during the whole of that time. I am not bound to do you such a service without receiving anything in return. Therefore, if you wish for my plane, besides the restoration already bargained for, you must give me a new plank as a compensation for the advantages of which I shall be deprived.'

"These terms were agreed to, but the singular part of it is that at the end of the year, when the plane came into James's possession, he lent it again; recovered it, and lent it a third and fourth time. It has passed into the hands of his son, who still lends it. Let us examine this little story. The plane is the symbol of all capital, and the plank is the symbol of all interest."

If this be an abridgment, what a graceful piece of highly wrought literature the original story must be! I take the liberty of abridging it a little more.

James makes a plane, lends it to William on 1st of January for a year. William gives him a plank for the loan of it, wears it out, and makes another for James, which he gives him on 31st December. On 1st January he again borrows the new one; and the arrangement is repeated continuously. The position of William therefore is, that he makes a plane every 31st of December; lends it to James till the next day, and pays James a plank annually for the privilege of lending it to him on that evening. This, in future investigations of capital and interest, we will call, if you please, "The Position of William."

You may not at the first glance see where the fallacy lies (the writer of the story evidently counts on your not seeing it at all).

If James did not lend the plane to William, he could only get his gain of a plank by working with it himself, and wearing it out himself. When he had worn it out at the end of the year, he would, therefore, have to make another for himself. William, working with it instead, gets the advantage instead, which he must, therefore, pay James his plank for; and return to James, what James would, if he had not lent his plane, then have had;—not a new plane—but the worn-out one. James must make a new one for himself, as he would have had to do if no William had existed; and if William likes to borrow it again for another plank—all is fair.

That is to say, clearing the story of its nonsense, that James makes a plane annually, and sells it to William for its proper price, which, in kind, is a new plank. But this arrangement has nothing whatever to do with principal, or with interest. There are, indeed, many very subtle conditions involved in any sale; one among which is the value of ideas; I will explain that value to you in the course of time; (the article is not one which modern political economists have any familiarity with dealings in;) and I will tell you somewhat also of the real nature of interest; but if you will only get, for the present, a quite clear idea of "the Position of William," it is all I want of you.

Common-Sense Mourners.

As far as we have seen the socialists of Chicago are alone entitled to the credit of filling the cup of grief without "slopping over." They adopted the following well-considered resolutions last Sunday on motion of T. J. Morgan:

Resolved, That this body deeply regrets the suffering and death of the late James A. Garfield; we desire it also understood that our regret and sympathy in this case differ in no respect from that which we feel at the suffering and death of the humblest worker who is stricken down in the performance of his duty; and,

Resolved, That we sympathize with his family in their bereavement, as we sympathize, but more keenly, with the poor worker's widow and family, who are left destitute to struggle for life, unnoticed and uncared for, with the human wolves who surround them.

Resolved, That as sincere grief is ever silent and undemonstrative, we cannot but protest against the present ostentatious demonstration of grief, as both insincere and unbecoming, and characteristic only of oriental and monarchical pageantry.